

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Background

The Division has a statutory obligation to provide for the transportation of its resident students to and from the school it has directed them to attend, if the parent of the student resides at a distance greater than 2.4 kilometers from the site of that school. This service is provided for a fee.

The Division also offers enhanced transportation service, for a fee, for approved distances less than 2.4 km from the designated school where space and resources allow.

The Division shall maintain a transportation service for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students for the purpose of transporting eligible students to and from school.

In addition to this Administrative Procedure 540, the Division will maintain a Bus Handbook with Frequently Asked Questions regarding the rules and regulations of transportation services that are provided by the Division and is agreed to by the students Parent/Guardian through the transportation registration process.

Guidelines

1. Transportation will be provided to rural pupils residing less than 2.4 kilometers from the school they are directed to attend, provided the bus is not required to deviate from its normal route, where safety conditions warrant, the bus fee is paid, and space is available on the bus.
2. Buses will not enter private driveways, cul-de-sacs or lanes to pick up urban pupils. Exceptions to this procedure will only be considered for those pupils requiring specialized supports, and each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.
3. Pupils residing in rural subdivisions may be picked up within the subdivision provided the subdivision road is greater than one-half kilometer in length and the student lives over the walk guidelines outlined on the Division website. This is subject to the timing of the route and the turning radius of a 72-passenger bus. Pickup stops within a subdivision will normally be limited to a maximum of two stops.
4. Gate service will normally be provided for rural students. However, safety factors, nearness of residences, turn-about points, time element, etc. may require a parent meet a loading or unloading point other than the rural gate.

5. The Transportation Department shall establish annual bus routes and shall approve any alterations to those routes throughout the school year.
6. The Transportation Department shall determine the most appropriate bus stop locations.
7. The Division designates which school the pupil will attend and provides transportation to the designated school as stated above. The pick-up and unloading points are determined by the Division.
8. In circumstances deemed appropriate by the Division and resident parent, the Division, instead of providing transportation on a regular bus route, may contract with the parent(s) or guardian(s) whereby the parent or guardian will convey the student(s) to and from a school located in another school jurisdiction, and receive payment in accordance with Alberta Education Regulations.
9. In situations where the Division contracts with a parent to transport his/her student, the Division is not liable for negligence arising out of the student being conveyed under such an arrangement.
10. The Division will maintain current documentation on file to support and verify Alberta Education transportation grant claims including:
 - 10.1 Names and grades of eligible passengers.
 - 10.2 Tuition transportation agreements.
 - 10.3 School bus route maps.
 - 10.4 Route distances.
 - 10.5 Attendance areas.
 - 10.6 Copies of overload permits.
 - 10.7 Names of parents and contractors providing transportation services.
 - 10.8 Details regarding transportation of disabled students to specialized schools or programs out-of-jurisdiction.
11. The Division expects bus drivers and school Principals to maintain levels of student discipline on the bus consistent with the student code of conduct. From time to time, on selected routes, cameras may be used to monitor behavior on the bus, at the discretion of the Division. When new cameras are introduced on a bus, parents will be notified by the automated system within the routing software, at the number provided by the parent in the Parental Portal, under the section my account/mobile. Notification will be displayed on the bus window when cameras are in place.
12. The Division authorizes any teachers, parents or individuals acting in a supervisory capacity to ride a school bus operated by the Division.

13. With the exception of those specified in Guideline 12 above and unless authorized by the Principal, adults are prohibited from being transported on jurisdiction-operated buses.
14. If a student is enrolled in a school in a jurisdiction in which the student does not reside, the parent of the student must provide for the transportation of the student:
 - 14.1 To and from the school in which the student is enrolled; or
 - 14.2 To and from a bus route in the transportation area that serves the school in which the student is enrolled.

Note: The jurisdiction in which the student is enrolled has an obligation to transport the student to and from the school on a bus route in the transportation area, only after the transportation needs of all resident students have been met.
15. Resident students of the Division entitled to a specialized support education program not available in the school in their attendance area shall be transported to and from the school that enrolls the student in that special education program.
16. Transportation fees may be charged according to rates, which are established from time to time by the Board.
17. Non-payment of fees may result in referral to a collection agency, and the outstanding balance must be paid before future bus pass applications are received.
 - 17.1 A minimum of 2 invoices are to be sent to the responsible parties for outstanding fees prior to any accounts being sent to a third party collection agency.
18. Transportation fees will be refunded, only upon completion of the Bus Cancellation Form (in the Parent Portal – forms tab) and the return of the student bus pass to the Transportation Department. Fees will only be refunded to full months remaining in the school year, not for a portion of a month, as outlined in Administrative Procedure 502.

Procedures

1. Students shall not be dropped off at a location other than the normal point of departure.
2. The bus driver is responsible for maintaining acceptable level of student discipline on the bus. Problems, which cannot be resolved by the bus driver, are to be referred to the school Principal will evaluate the situation and initiate an appropriate response.
3. The bus driver is required to stop at designated stops determined by the Division's Transportation Department.

4. The bus driver is not to make adjustments to a stop location or the route direction unless previously approved by the Transportation Department.
5. The Principal is responsible for informing students and parents with regard to transportation procedures, guidelines and regulations.
6. Parents are expected to notify the Transportation Department in writing through the Parent Portal or via email when they no longer require bus service (applies to both urban & rural) or when bus service is to resume after an extended absence (applies to rural only).
7. Refunds will be given to the original payee only upon return of the bus pass to the Transportation Department. No refunds will be provided after January 31st of any given school year, when cancellation is requested while still a student in the Division. Refunds for service cancellation, when a student is leaving the Division, will be processed as outlined in Administrative Procedure 502. If payment was received by the Transportation Department in the way of cash or cheque, a cheque will be processed and mailed to the original payee. If payment was received by MasterCard or VISA, the refund will be applied to the originating credit card.
8. Busses transporting only ECS students in rural areas out of town will pick up and drop off students on the gate side of their residence whenever possible.
9. Students in ECS or grade 1 will not be dropped off at their designated stop without a parent present to accept them. Students will be returned to the school of enrolment. Individuals meeting students should be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time. If a parent cannot fulfill this requirement, he/she can:
 - 7.1 Designate an alternate adult or older sibling to receive their child. Advance written notification of this alternate adult or designated older sibling must be provided to the Transportation Department and it will be held on file for the current school year. The Transportation Department will notify its contractors; or
 - 7.2 If a parent wishes their child to be released without an approved adult or designated older sibling at the stop at the time of disembarkation, a Waiver Form can be completed by the parent/guardian. This Waiver Form releases the Division, its elected officials and officers, agents, administrators, independent contractors, employees and volunteers from any and all liability once the child disembarks the school bus. This Waiver Form can be obtained from the Transportation Department.
10. Where allowed, school buses operating for the jurisdiction shall use their red and amber flashing lights and activate the stop arm at all stops involving students entering or leaving the bus except when loading or unloading where bus bays have been provided.

References: Section 37, 59, 59.1, *Education Act*; School Transportation Regulation 96/2019

Board Policy 2, section - 7, AP 502 – Fees, Refunds & Waivers

Revision Date: January 12, 2012, April 20, 2016, June 21, 2018, June 3, 2019, March 3, 2021, July 20, 2021

RULES FOR STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

1. The driver is in full charge of the bus at all times.
2. Students must always present their bus pass to the driver to board the bus.
3. Students may be assigned seats and shall remain in that seat while on the bus.
4. Students are not to attempt to get on or off the bus or move inside the bus while the vehicle is in motion.
5. Students are expected to be on time. The bus will not wait in the morning for students who are not at or approaching the pick-up point at the scheduled time.
6. Students are expected to go promptly to their bus after school is dismissed or when their bus is scheduled to leave school. Buses will wait for ten (10) minutes after dismissal for loading. Students transferring to a second bus must not leave the transfer bus stop area while waiting.
7. Students must ride their designated scheduled bus.
8. Apart from ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed while riding the bus.
9. Students must not throw paper or rubbish on the floor of the bus or out of the windows.
10. While leaving the bus, students shall observe the directions of the driver.
11. Ice skates may be taken on the bus in a strong bag with the blades covered. A plastic bag or paper bag is not acceptable.
12. Students shall leave equipment in the area designated by the driver. The driver will refuse to carry large items that obstruct aisles or doors, or may be a danger in any way.
13. Any student who violates bus regulations shall be reported to the Principal of the school he/she attends as soon as possible by the driver. The Principal has the authority to suspend or recommend permanent withdrawal of the bus privileges subject to the provisions of the *Education Act*.

14. In order to assist with furthering the safety of transportation, video surveillance may be used to determine responsibility for breaches to rules or transportation safety.
15. The following activities are prohibited:
 - 15.1 Unnecessary conversation with or distraction of the driver.
 - 15.2 Extending any part of the body out of the window.
 - 15.3 Possessing alcoholic beverages.
 - 15.4 Profane language.
 - 15.5 Smoking or possession of tobacco products
 - 15.6 Fighting.
 - 15.7 Moving about the bus while the bus is in motion.
 - 15.8 Eating or drinking.
 - 15.9 Inappropriate use of mobile technology, such as laptops, personal data assistants, cellular devices, iPads, iPods, E-Readers, and other devices that have the ability to store data electronically.